



Task Force for Learning Acceleration

Just as the Task Force recognizes the immense challenges faced by schools, educators, students and families as they prepare for safely returning to school, it also recognizes the leadership role and responsibilities DESE takes in supporting those students, educators and their families. These considerations are part of the Task Force recommendations to be addressed by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE),

Work group 1: Assessing Learning Loss

Assessing the Loss

What do you need to know about your students' learning upon entering school in the fall?

- Missouri educators without an assessment system need access to tools, resources, and assessments.
- Districts should formatively assess to determine gaps in learning using district designed, or if possible, DESE provided assessments.
- DESE should provide for Missouri educators to share a bank of questions for formative assessments that are aligned to Missouri Learning Standards.

Appropriate Tools

What tools do you plan to use in the 20-21 school year to provide information on student academic progress, success and achievement?

- DESE design and administer a survey to all the districts to identify tools the districts use to identify students strengths and weaknesses, and whether they are purchased or locally-designed and built.
 - What tools should be available to schools and districts?
- Release or use of items from DESE item bank that includes grade-level or end-of-course.

Data and Interpretation

What information do we have and what do we need?

- DESE provides optional MO LEAP assessment tools that are voluntary assessments to help districts evaluate students' preparedness for learning and that allow for raw score and itemized reports.
 - What are the best uses for cohort data and student-level data?
- DESE will provide reflection questions and sample responses for districts to use as a guide. What data is needed to differentiate instruction and determine appropriate learning pathways?
- DESE provides PD around data use and assessment literacy common language types of assessments, how to use assessment data, etc.
 - Can DESE provide a definition of terms

Work group 2: Acceleration of Learning

- Could DESE provide common benchmark assessments?
- Is there a possibility of standardizing formative/benchmark data into a common database that could be used to facilitate learning? As we have students who move from district to district we are forced to re-test and do leveling work again. If these data were standardized and placed in a system we could access in each district, it would accelerate the learning for our students.



This support was created by the DESE Task Force for Learning Acceleration, made up of three workgroups: Assessment of Learning Loss, Acceleration of Learning, and Reaching All Students.

This collection of recommendations, tools and resources was created to help guide instructional planning for the return to school in fall 2020.

The task force recognizes the immense challenges faced by schools, educators, students and families as they prepare for safely returning to school. It applauds the efforts of all involved in meeting the challenges of limited resources and uncertainty as they plan for the next school year



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Work group 2: Acceleration of Learning (continued)

- Provide information about continuity of learning requirements.
 - Will a “Continuity of Learning” Plan be something that districts will need to submit to DESE for approval? Is this “Continuity of Learning” Plan going to be the same as the “Alternative Methods of Instruction” Plan that is required to be submitted to DESE?
- Provide information about best practices for online learning.
 - If synchronous, how much time and how is it best used? If delivering direct instruction, how much do we deliver and how is it best accomplished? What types of projects, tasks, or assignments lend themselves to the best online learning opportunities for students?
 - What does DESE recommend for a scope and sequence?
 - How does DESE recommend teachers provide feedback for students in online learning?
 - What should be the first questions teachers ask themselves as they design online lessons? How do teachers “check their work” after designing online instruction to feel confident they have sufficiently planned?
 - Will this work be a living document that can be added to as we learn more?
- How do we ensure students scheduled to graduate at the end of the 20-21 school year will meet all requirements in the event of remote learning being needed at some point during the school year?

Work group 3: Reaching All Students

- Curate a repository of district recommended resources and recommendations supporting the physical and social-emotional needs of our state’s students, families, and educators.
 - Provide an easily accessible resource site on the DESE webpage with the following divisions:
 - Elementary (K-5), Middle School (6-8), High School (9-12); all students, students with IEPs, English Language Learners, At-Risk, and Gifted/ Talented; Families; Educators/Staff; LEAs
 - Promote collaboration between national, state, and local agencies to provide access to existing resources compiled by their agencies, which address physical and social-emotional needs, include these topics;
 - Legal information, translations (a bank of adaptable readily available forms), surveys, community services for food distributions and housing assistance, local resources for health and counseling services.
 - Provide an avenue for districts to request additional information not included within the repository.
- Organize readily available pre-recorded and live professional development opportunities addressing return to school anxiety, trauma, trauma-informed discipline, social-emotional learning, and creation of affirming and inclusive learning environments for our most vulnerable students.
 - Provide an easily accessible repository of professional development opportunities (live and pre-recorded) on socio-emotional topics as they pertain to our most vulnerable students on a dedicated DESE webpage.
- Districts and schools focus on acceleration of learning with necessary accommodations and scaffolding rather than large-scale return-to-school remediation. While considering at-risk and vulnerable students, districts should identify and mitigate gaps that stand in the way of inclusion, equity, and excellence for all while enacting this recommendation.
 - Provide an easily accessible repository of professional development opportunities (live and pre-recorded) on a dedicated DESE webpage that address best practices for accommodating and supporting the learning needs of our most vulnerable students.
 - Remove accountability usage of testing data from the 2020-2021 school year before August 1, 2020. This action would give districts permission to think about growth versus grade levels for this school year.